REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the Office Action of October 22, 2007. This submission was previously electronically submitted to the USPTO on February 22nd, 2008. Applicant has not yet received an advisory action in response to this submission, and as of today, March 24th, 2008, this submission has not been accepted by the Examiner. A check of the PAIR system today verified this information. Applicant telephoned the Examiner today, March 24th to ascertain status with respect to an advisory action. However, the Examiner was not available. Therefore, in order to keep the application alive and to further prosecution this amendment and argument are being submitted and should qualify as a "submission" for RCE purposes. This request for continued examination is intended to be fully responsive to the outstanding final office action.

Discussion of Examiner's Response to Argument

Receiving Portion and Recess

The Examiner disagreed to the Applicant's argument regarding the receiving portion and recess by saying that US5609463 to Kobayashi (Kobayashi) discloses in Fig. 1 the waterproof seal (2) in recess (12) on top of the receiving portion (10). The Examiner concluded that the Applicant's argument that "the positioning of the receiving recess, which as claimed receiving recess (P), receives the waterproof seal (2) with top thereof directing a center of the receiving portion (Fig. 1)", is not persuasive. The Applicant respectfully disagrees because of the following reasons.

Kobayashi shows the recesses (12) on the turn table for fitting the waterproof seals (2) therein. In order to properly place the seals (2) in the recesses 12, the seals

2 need to be arranged vertically (so that the longitudinal direction of the seals (2) becomes the vertical direction) on the turn table surface and are lowered aiming and fitting in the recesses 12. Accordingly, the seals (2) placed in the recesses (12), as shown in Figs. 1 and 9, are inserted as the longitudinal direction thereof along the direction of the long axle (11) of the rotational center of the turn table, and all seals (2) are facing in the same direction.

In the present invention, as shown in Figs. 4 and 6, the receiving recesses (27) are positioned on a peripheral line of the turn table (28) with predetermined intervals. This layout is obviously different from Kobayashi. In order to place the seals (46) in the recesses (27), ends of the seals (46) need to face the center of the turn table (28). Therefore, the seals (46) fitting in the recesses (27) are arranged radially relative to the center of the turn table (28).

In the present invention, a front end and a bottom end of the seal (46) are different in their shapes, and therefore the seals (46), when being placed in the opening of the recesses (27), can properly be placed as the shape differences help to restrict the misplacement. Furthermore, in the removal process, the installed seals (46) are removed in an orthogonal direction relative to the rotational axle of the turn table, as shown in Figs. 3 and 4. The take-out means (35) is positioned orthogonal to the circumference of the receiving portion, and the seals are moved to the take-out position due to the rotation of the receiving portion, then transferred to the next process as being taken out horizontally along the direction of the axial right angle by the take-out device (35).

The seals (2) of Kobayashi are removed in the axial direction of the turn table. Contrary to Kobayashi, the seals (46) of the present invention are securely and stably aligned and positioned in the predetermined direction without a chance of displacement

or dislocation and the removal operation thereof show significant improvements over Kobayashi.

Turntable and Inclination

The Examiner disagrees with the Applicant's argument regarding the turn table saying that Kobayashi discloses "rotating the turntable about the longitudinal axis by the specified angle and slide means for sliding the turntable in its radial direction". The Applicant respectfully disagrees.

As shown in Fig. 1 of Kobayashi, the turntable is installed with its axle (11) positioned vertically along the center of the rotation, and the surface thereof is simply horizontal and parallel to the ground surface on which the device is positioned. The Examiner's suggestion of "rotating the turntable about longitudinal axis by the specified angle" means that the air motor (40) rotates the turntable (10) to a predetermined extent based on the information from the rotational displacement sensor. The surface of the turntable (10) is horizontal and approximately parallel to the ground surface. The turntable(10) turns around the axle to the certain extent and is laterally slid in X direction in Fig. 1, thereby adjusting the position of the recesses (12) to a seal removing position of the conveying device (110) so as to pick up the seals (2). There is no motivation for Kobayashi to incline the turntable because Kobayashi's seals (2) are inserted vertically into the recesses (12) on the surface of the turntable.

Removal of Seals

The Examiner disagrees with the Applicant's argument regarding the removal of the seals by saying that Kobayashi then teaches waterproof plugs (2) is picked up by the pin member of the conveyor device moved upward and downward which is the

direction of removing the plugs. The Applicant respectfully disagrees. As already discussed above, the turntable surface of Kobayashi is horizontal, and the seals (2) thereon need to be removed in the opposite direction of inserting the same, i.e., upward. In the present invention, the seals (46) are positioned at the peripheral line of the turntable and are removed horizontally.

Removal of Seals

The Examiner disagrees with the Applicant's argument regarding the vibratory means by saying that Kobayashi does teach a vibratory means, where the Applicant does not, but it should not matter since Kobayashi teaches the other claimed features. The Applicant respectfully disagrees. In addition to the above-described differences, for Kobayashi, the vibration means is an essential element of the invention because without the vibration means Kobayashi cannot function well to properly install the seals (2) in the recesses (12) due to the horizontal turntable surface.

Cover

The Examiner disagrees with the Applicant's argument regarding the cover by saying that Kobayashi in Fig. 1 shows cover (10) mounting on support member (20) restricting the movements of the waterproof seals. The Applicant respectfully disagrees. The reference number (10) of Fig. 1 and the description of lines 15-20 of column 4 refer to the turntable (10) and no teaching of "cover" exists. In that column, there is the support member (20) for the turntable (10); however, this member is to support the turntable (10) from the bottom surface of the turntable (10) and is clearly not for preventing the seals from jumping out. The support member (20) is provided at the opposite side from where the seals are placed.

35 USC 102 and 103 REJECTIONS

Claims 1, 2, and 4 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Kobayashi, and Claim 3 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kobayashi in view of US5826697 to Mochizuki (Mochizuki). The Applicant respectfully disagrees. Because of the above-identified differences, neither Kobayashi or Kobayashi and Mochizuki should be grounds for rejecting the present invention.

Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted Claims 1-4 are now in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is respectfully requested. No new matter has been added.

Should the Examiner believe further discussion regarding the above claim language would expedite prosecution they are invited to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

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